

DEADLY DUTCH HIGH™

SCENE: THE WALK TO THE DORM

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EXT. HOUSING OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The key sits heavy in KIM's palm-tarnished teeth, red thread knotted tight and uneven.

The HOUSING ATTENDANT'S last warning hangs in the doorway like cold breath.

Nor looks down the EAST PATH.

NOR

Keep to the path.

Kim pockets the key without looking away from the trees.

EXT. EAST PATH - CONTINUOUS

The walk is long-longer than it should be.

The trail winds into the densest part of the grounds where the canopy closes overhead, sealing the world behind them.

Stone MARKERS appear at irregular intervals, worn smooth by time, their purpose unreadable.

Rust-red LANTERNS sway above, flames faint and pulsing—casting more shadow than light.

The air smells of moss and cold water.

Low, measuring MURMURS drift through the branches—too steady to be random.

The sound reacts when they slow.

(No one speaks.)

Kim glances up once—just once—

and the canopy aligns into something that feels like a face.

A gaze.

Kim doesn't comment. She tightens her grip on her strap.

The others slow anyway, as if they felt it too.

The trunks CREAK. Not wind—movement. The suggestion of trees pivoting by degrees.

Even when the murmurs stop, the attention stays—pressed against the backs of their necks.

A distant SOUND threads through the woods—low and drawn out, like a voice calling across water.

It carries the shape of a word none of them recognize.

It lingers too long before fading.

They still haven't seen another student.

Curfew feels active in the silence—lantern light without warmth, emptiness that seems enforced.

Lanterns ahead flicker with cold light—no visible flame—each one turning their shadows into something unfamiliar.

Kim's focus drifts—

the moss, the lean of distant towers, the wrong angles—

and memory cracks open.

INSERT - KIM'S MEMORY - GRANDFATHER'S STUDY (FLASH)

A younger KIM (9) sits in a dim study. Firelight. Dust motes.

A hidden book—leather-bound, sealed with wax—marked by an emblem: a BLACK TREE wrapped around a CROOKED TOWER.

GRANDFATHER (O.S.)

You shouldn't be reading that, little lotus.

YOUNG KIM

Why not?

GRANDFATHER (O.S.)

Dutch High wasn't just made. It was assembled... pulled into being.

A design too perfect. A madness too precise.

Liam Ryder didn't draw blueprints—he summoned a place that was never meant to exist.

BACK TO SCENE

Kim blinks—air pressure shifts.

The trees grow denser. Light dims.

Beyond the branches, DUTCH HIGH begins to appear—not as one reveal, but as something rising through water.

Towers lean against gravity. Paths curl back on themselves.

Staircases climb into open air. Archways stand where walls do not.

The campus isn't placed on the island—

it's part of it.

GRANDFATHER (O.S.)

Paths shift. Doors lead somewhere different depending on the time of day.

And the deeper in you go... the less sure you are you'll come back the same.

Kim's heartbeat quickens as the path curves hard LEFT.

A clearing opens ahead—wrong in its stillness.

Too quiet.

And there it stands.

DORMITORY BUILDING TWO.

A weathered plaque is set near the entrance:

INSERT - PLAQUE

Entered by invitation. Never by accident, 1922

Kim stops.

Not fear—pressure. Awareness.

Like the building has been waiting.

GRANDFATHER (O.S.)

It will find the ones it wants.

And once it does... the walls start listening.

Nor and Ema stop with her.

The air thickens as they approach the door.

The DOOR CREAKS—opening a fraction on its own.

Kim doesn't move.

She isn't sure she can.

Because this isn't something she read anymore.

It's something she's living.

The three girls stand—silent—staring at the dorm entrance.

CUT TO BLACK.